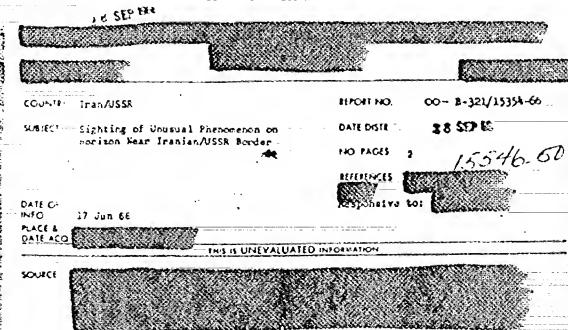
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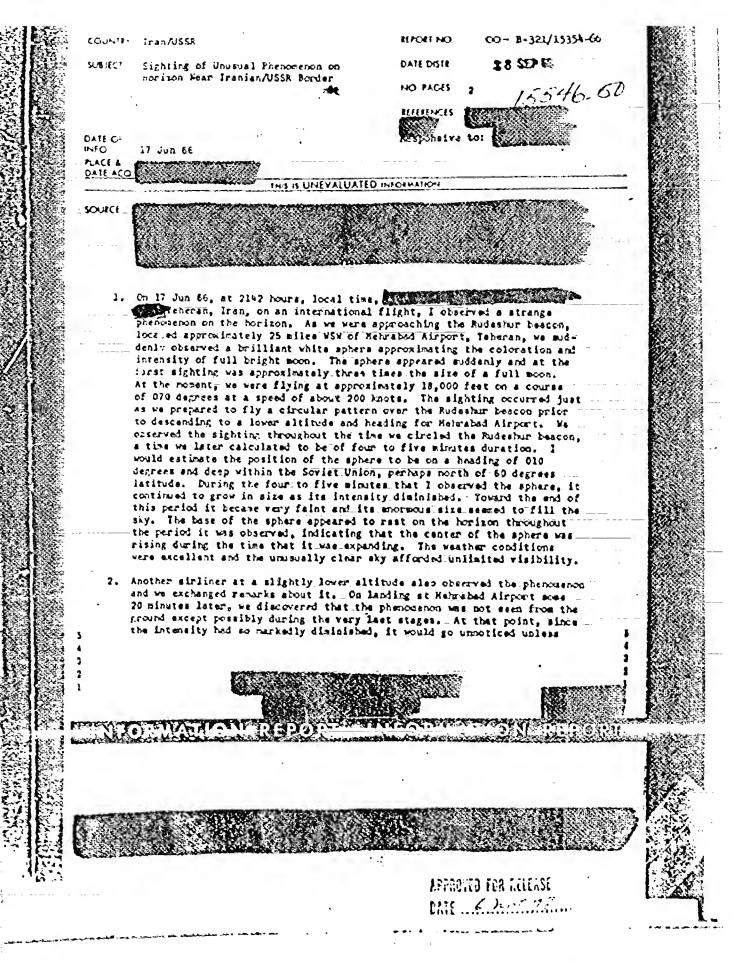
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY



- 2. Cn 17 Jun 66, at 2142 hours, local time, deheran, Iran, on an international flight, I observed a strange. phenomenon on the horizon. As we were approaching the Rudashur beacon, located approximately 25 miles WSW of Mehrabed Airport, Teheran, we muddenly observed a brilliant\_white sphers\_approximating the coloration and intensity of full bright soon. The sphere appeared suddenly and et the irrat sighting was approximately three times the eize of a full moon. At the moment, we were flying at approximately 18,000 feet on a course of 070 degrees at a speed of about 200 knots. The sighting occurred just as we prepared to fly a circular pattern over the Rudeshur beacon prior to descending to a lover altitude and heading for Hebrahad Airport. Wa observed the sighting throughout the time we circled the Rudesbur beacon; e time we later calculated to be of four to five minutes duration. I would estimate the position of the aphere to be on a heading of 010 degrees and deep within the Soviet Union, perhaps north of 60 degrees latitude. During the four to five minutes that I observed the aphere, it continued to grow in size as its intensity disinished. Toward the end of this period it became very faint and its anormous size seemed to fill the sky. The base of the sphere appeared to rest on the horizon throughout the period it was observed, indicating that the center of the sphere was rising during the time that it was expanding. The weather conditions were excellent and the unusually clear sky afforded unlimited visibility.
- 2. Another similars at a slightly lower altitude also observed the phenomenon and we exchanged remarks about it. On landing at Hahrabad Airport some 20 minutes later, we discovered that the phenomenon was not seen from the ground except possibly during the very last stages. At that point, since the intensity had so markedly disinished, it would go unnoticed unless ——

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unless one were elected to look for it. The reason for its being obscured from the ground is attributed to the skupt rise of the very high nountain range north of the city in the direction of the phenomenon.

3. I don't know what caused this atrange occurrence which we observed. I had rever seen snything resembling it in over 20 years of flying experience. One theory advanced to me was that the shpere was a "false moon" and that such a phenomenon was seen near Rose, Italy. By feeling is that the aphara was formed by gases emanating perhaps from a men-made explosion. These gases forming the sphere may have been illuminated by the sun from the back side. If this were the case, it would account for the diminishing intensity as the density of the gases decreased with the expension of the sphere.

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